

Message Text

SECRET

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42

ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

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O 111355Z SEP 76 ZFF4

FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4003

S E C R E T LUSAKA 2383

NODIS/CHEROKEE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR RH ZA

SUBJECT: NKOMO RETURN TO RHODESIA

REF: (A) LUSAKA 2377, (B) LUSAKA 2378

1. CHONA TOLD ME IN STRICTEST CONFIDENCE THAT STATE HOUSE (PETER KASANDA) HAD RECEIVED A DIRECT PHONE CALL YESTERDAY FROM THE NUMBER TWO MAN IN THE RHODESIAN INTELLIGENCE SERVICE. AFTER CHECKING WITH THE PRESIDENT, THEY DECIDED TO RECEIVE THE CALL THOUGH THEY WOULD HAVE REFUSED TO HAVE RETURNED IT THEMSELVES HAD THE CONNECTION BEEN BROKEN. CHONA DESCRIBED THE INDIVIDUAL AS A PERSON HE KNOWS WELL AND WHO IS SYMPATHETIC.

2. THE PURPOSE OF THE CALL WAS TO SEEK ZAMBIAN ASSISTANCE IN PREVAILING UPON NKOMO NOT RETURN TO RHODESIA FOR AT LEAST A WEEK.

3. CHONA TOLD ME THERE WAS NO QUESTION BUT THAT THEY WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL IN DISSUADING NKOMO FROM GOING TO RHODESIA. HE SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHY RHODESIAN WERE DISCOURAGING NKOMO'S RETURN TO RHODESIA NEXT WEEK.

4. COMMENT: MANY HERE FEEL NKOMO WAS IN SERIOUS DANGER OF BEING ARRESTED HAD HE RETURNED. IT WAS MY IMPRESSION IN MY CONVERSATION WITH NKOMO LAST WEEK

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(LUSAKA 2281) THATHE RECOGNIZED THE POSSIBILITY AND

WAS QUITE PREPARED FOR--OR MAY EVEN HAVE WELCOMED--
ARREST IN SALISBURY. IT SEEMS POSSIBLE THAT THE
RHODESIANS INVOLVED DID NOT WANT NKOMO ARRESTED AT
THIS MOMENT. SUCH AN ARREST COULD ONLY HAVE COMPLICATED
THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS BEING UNDERTAKEN BY THE SECRETARY.
NKOMO'S STRATEGY DEPENDS ON THE FACT THAT HE IS PERHAPS
THE BEST KNOWN AMONG THE NATIONALISTS INSIDE OF RHODESIA.
WHILE HE HAS DIFFICULTY COMPETING AGAINST THE ATTRACTIVE
YOUNGER AND MORE MILITANT NATIONALISTS OF ZANU AND THE
THIRD FORCE OUTSIDE RHODESIA. HE SEES HIS POSITION
INSIDE RHODESIA AS HIS BEST HOPEFOR PROJECTING HIMSELF
INTO LEADERSHIP OF AN INDEPENDENT ZIMBABWE. SUCH A
STRATEGY IS ALSO REFLECTED IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE
YESTERDAY (REF B) IN WHICH HE CRITICIZED THE US FOR
PRESSING FOR UNITY AMONG THE NATIONALISTS.

5. PLEASE PASS NAIROBI FOR SCHAUFEELE.

LOW

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

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